

In the Claims

Claims are amended as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method of billing a communications network user for the purchase of goods or services associated with the transport of packet traffic from that communications network into a packet communications network, each packet having an address which identifies a provider of goods or services, wherein the method comprises; providing a set of rules, and determining from said rules and each packet address, a respective billing tariff and a network user account to be debited for the transport of that packet

and the method further comprises obtaining a coupon from an account database, representing an amount of credit, and debiting a network user account by the amount of that credit, before allowing the transport of packet traffic for that network user.
2. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein account details for network users and account details of providers of goods and services are stored in a common accounts database.
3. (original) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein transfers of credit between accounts stored in the accounts database are determined from coupons generated for each transaction.
4. (original) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein network users have prepaid and postpaid accounts.
5. (original) A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein each user account is accorded a respective credit limit.
6. (original) A method as claimed in claim 5, wherein a user validation is performed prior to completion of a transaction.

7. (original) A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein the network is a wireless network.

8. (currently amended) A method of on-line shopping in which the cost of goods or services purchased by a customer are debited to that customer's pre-paid or postpaid account with a network operator, and a corresponding credit is applied to an account held by the a provider of those goods or services

and the method further comprises obtaining a coupon from an account database, representing an amount of credit, and debiting a network user account by the amount of that credit, before allowing the transport of packet traffic for that network user.

9. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein a transaction charge is retained by the network operator.

10. (original) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein a supplier of goods or services is credited with a portion of the network operator's revenue for the transport of packet traffic relating to a transaction.

11. (currently amended) A method of providing combined billing of a communications packet network user for the delivery of communications services to that user and for the on-line purchase of goods and services by the user via the communications network, wherein the method comprises; providing a set of rules, and determining from said rules and each packet address, a respective billing tariff and a network user account to be debited for the transport of that packet

and the method further comprises obtaining a coupon from an account database, representing an amount of credit, and debiting a network user account by the amount of that credit, before allowing the transport of packet traffic for that network user.

12. (original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein network users have prepaid and postpaid accounts.

13. (original) A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein each user account is accorded a respective credit limit.

14. (original) A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein a supplier of goods or services is credited with a portion of the network operator's revenue for the transport of packet traffic relating to a transaction.

15. (original) A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said network comprises a wireless network.

16. (original) Software in machine readable form on a storage medium and arranged to perform the method of claim 15.

17. (currently amended) Apparatus for billing a communications network user for the purchase of goods or services associated with the transport of packet traffic from that communications network into a packet communications network, the apparatus comprising:

means for providing each packet with an address which identifies a provider of goods or services,

a store having a set of rules, and

a packet analyzer for determining from said rules and each packet address, a respective billing tariff and a network user account to be debited or credited for the transport of that packet; and

means for obtaining a coupon from an account database, representing an amount of credit, and debiting a network user account by the amount of that credit, before allowing the transport of packet traffic for that network user.

18. (original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein network users have prepaid and postpaid accounts.

19. (original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 18, wherein each user account is accorded a respective credit limit.

20. (original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein said network comprises a wireless network.